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Mr. O M E R's
LETTER
TO THE
PUBLIC.

Comptroller of the INLAND NAVIGATION
Examined ;

AND THE
OBSERVATIONS
ON THE

Said LETTER observed upon.

*Who steals my Purse, steals Trash; 'tis something nothing ;
'Twas mine, 'tis his ; and has been Slave to Thousands.
But he, that filches from me my good Name,
Robs me of that, which not enriches him,
And makes me poor indeed.* SHAKESPEAR.

D U B L I N :

Printed for WILLIAM SMITH, at the *Hercules* in
Dame-street. M DCC LV.

LETTER



Men of Reason and Reflection agree, that Reputation is the most valuable and most sacred Appurage of Man; and where the Character of a Man is brought in Question, it cannot be treated with too much Caution and Tenderness; tho' no Rank in Life is exempt from the Attacks of Envy and Malice, whose Wounds are more to be dreaded than the Daggers of an Assassin; yet for Men of Protections or Employments, who exist only by their Credit, Humanity is doubly engaged in protecting their good Name. On the other Side, Men who exist by the Publick, however pompous their Titles, yet as they stand more exposed

Mr. O M E R's
L E T T E R
T O T H E
P U B L I C, &c.

MEN of Reason and Reflection agree, that Reputation is the most valuable and most sacred Appenage of Man; and where the Character of a Man is brought in Question, it cannot be treated with too much Caution and Tenderness; tho' no Rank in Life is exempt from the Attacks of Envy and Malice, whose Wounds are more to be dreaded than the Daggers of an Assassin; yet for Men of Professions or Employments, who exist only by their Credit, Humanity is doubly engaged in protecting their good Name. On the other Side, Men who exist by the Public, however pompous their Titles, yet as they stand more

A 2 exposed

exposed to public View, they should be extremely circumspect and correct in their Actions, as all People have an undoubted Right to inspect into the Conduct of their Agents; for he that conniveth at or consenteth to the Impositions of another, partaketh of his evil Deeds.

In this Temper of Mind let us examine a Letter signed with the Name and Title of a Servant to the Navigation Board.

Comptroller implies *Director*, and *Director* supposes Abilities and Integrity suited to his Employment. All Artists require some peculiar Qualifications, without which they cannot Act in their Professions. Thus an Architect must understand the *Square* and *Plummet*. A Multitude of Whims may be offered upon Paper; but he can never give his Opinion or Advice to Build before he has examined the Situation and Materials: Nor can he compute the Expence, without knowing the Cost of the constituent Parts. To consult a blind Man upon Colours appears ridiculous, and to appoint him a Gunner would be absurd. There cannot be a greater Severity shewn to the Petulancy of any Man, than extorting an Opinion from him upon Facts, you are sure he has no Knowledge of. The Report in this Case must be called his *Fancy* not his *Opinion*. Thus the Letter above mentioned, seems to press hard upon the Person whose Name is put to it, and is calculated to expose rather than justify him.

Mr. OMER'S LETTER.

The *Comptroller* of the Inland Navigation, was ordered to form a Scheme, and prepare Plans for making

making a Navigation from the City of Dublin, to the River Shannon; and he now is, and always was of Opinion, that such a Thing could not be effected, without the Help of the Liffey.

ANSWER and REMARK.

That he may have formed a Scheme agreeable to his Orders can neither be affirmed or denied: He has not produced, nor could he in the Time have obtained Proof from Experiment to form a Judgment on; therefore his Opinion is of no Consequence; *tho' he is now and always was of Opinion that a Navigation could not be effected without the help of the Liffey.* This bespeaks Prepossession; but can he deny that if the Rye-Water be proved sufficient to supply a Level to Castleknock, that a Navigation may be made to Dublin without the help of the Liffey? And can he deny that he was shewed how the Black Water might be conveyed into the Rye Water, and several other Brooks were pointed out to him, when he took his View, and other Waters lying between *Monglare* and *Dublin* may be applied to said Level? And can he deny that the usual Current, of that River would fill a Level in fifty Hours? and that a constant Current of six Inch Squares of Water would keep it always full? And does he not know that the Liffey Water frequently fails, and always before the Rye Water.

His own Penetration and Experience certainly assured him, that a Mountain Torrent Wastes itself sooner than the Meandering Waters of an extended Vale: And if his Knowledge is not superior

perior to enquiry, the Inhabitants of the Country would have attested the Fact.

To make this equally convenient to the Citizens and Country, he would chuse to begin his first Canal, as near the City Basen as would be convenient; and to carry it on through a flat Country, to the most proper Place to cross the Liffey; and from thence through the Bog of Allen (where are the Heads of several Rivers, which will amply furnish Water to fill the Canals,) and so on, by the Brosnah, to the Shannon. And should the Bog of Allen be found troublesome, or expensive, he can easily fall into Part of the River Barrow; whence there is a certain Passage to be had by the Brosnah to the Shannon; which is in Length, by an accurate Survey lately made thereof, fifty five Miles and eleven Perches.

ANSWER and REMARK.

To engage the Favour of Thomas-Street, he chooses to begin at the City Basen: And a dry Piece of Work he will have through a Quarry to the Liffey near Clain, undoubtedly he has tried every Yard of the Soil, as well as he has taken care not to mention the Number of Locks requisite in 200 Feet fall from his crossing the Liffey. The Number 200 Feet is mentioned by Guess; yet this Guess is better founded than his Opinion; for if the Liffey from Island Bridge to Leixlip rises 96 Feet, it must be more than as much again to the Place he has taken a fancy to cross it.

Now, by-the-by, his Notion of a flat Country is a little peculiar, where the Declivity is 200 Feet

Feet in a few Miles: This Number of Feet requires 33 Locks in less than 20 Miles.—Well, but pass on to the Bog of *Allen*, and take care you don't sink out of your Depth. *The Heads of Rivers that issue out of this Bog, will amply fill the Canal*: Yes; 'till it is drained and subsides.—And 'till that happens, a Canal cannot be made. What Number of Years will it take, to bring it to that State, no Man can positively say; and unluckily the Rivers run directly contrary to this imaginary Scheme. *See the Map*. And pray where does he propose to find the Rivers when he has drained the Bog? This is what may be called a *Bull*. He himself thinks it is better to go about; so, away we leap to the *Barrow*; where Note, that *Peter* says the *Liffey* is to supply that Level also: This brings in Corn and Coals from *Kilkenny*, &c. Pray how many Miles from the *Barrow* to the *Liffey*? What are the Levels of the Ground between the two Rivers, and what the Soil? When Mr. *Omer* diverts the Head of the *Barrow* into this Level, what is to supply those Parts of the River that are navigable at present? And lastly, Why should Mr. *Omer* desire People to go out of their Way, and lose those immense Advantages, that would arise from joining the *Barrow* to the *Boyne*, which, at present, requires but three or four Miles of a Canal to compleat the Junction of the two Rivers, and by that Course would conduct them to *Dublin* through the *Rye-Water*, with about Half the Number of Locks, and give a certain Communication to *Drogheda*, and most other Parts of *Leinster*, and open

open five Times the Trade for Coals. When People reflect on these Advantages, they cannot afford to indulge his whimsical Project.

T'other Leap over Bogs and all, and we arrive at the *Brofna*: These same Bogs have the same good Properties of the Bog of *Allen*. And don't let him forget to tumble down that 120 Feet, in three Quarters of a Mile, in that Approach to the *Sbannon*. Mr. *Peters* has mentioned another Trace by *Firbane*, which forms a Circuit of 28 Miles, yet the Levels appear to rise still to 141 Feet 2 Inches $\frac{1}{2}$, and one Foot mistake in his Calculation makes the Whole 142 Feet 2 Inches $\frac{1}{2}$; by which Progress he has saved 9 Inches $\frac{1}{2}$. However, if we consider the Quantity, it will be easy enough to bring up all the Corn, *Clare* and the adjacent Country can spare from the western Ports (where it ought to be exported for foreign Market) for the Supply of *Dublin*, and which is the whole public Advantage proposed by this expensive Project.

Let us see this accurate Survey that corrects all the Maps of *Ireland*; nay, our infallible Guide, *Watson's Almanack*: It says, *Banagher* is 54 Miles, *Longford* 50 from *Dublin*: But does this Trace of fifty-five Miles and eleven Perch go round the Bog of *Allen* to the *Barrow*, and so to the *Brofna*? If it does, and Mr. *Omer* has expressly said so; Mr. *Peters* confesses it is 70 Miles, and the Levels 450 Feet, which at 6 Feet each Lock will require 72 Locks. When was this Measurement made? And had he ever seen it

it at the Time he declared the *Banagher Line* ten Miles shorter *.

By the other Scheme, From the River Shannon, to any Spot of Ground on the North Side the *Liffey*, opposite the City Basin, the Ascents and Descents are as follow.

ANSWER AND REMARKS.

The Passage to the Shannon is not a Scheme, but a regular Trace of Waters, that to the Knowledge, and by the Confession of Mr. Comptroller, can be improved and shortened, in many Places, without a single Impediment. Therefore, the stating the Levels, in the Manner mentioned, is injurious to the Comptroller, by representing Things as Facts, that he knows, and has remarked the Means of improving otherwise. What Nature has done he cannot but say was justly traced and followed: What Art can do, on such Principles, remains the Fact to be examined.

When first Mr. Comptroller was shewed the general Map of all the Rivers in *Leinster*, no Part of the Trace was communicated to him, but he was desired to look it over, and give his Opinion. Upon viewing it, he remarked the River *Inny*, and said, "he never knew there was such a River. He then said, that he always had given his Opinion, that if a Navigation was made from *Dublin* to the *Shannon*, "it must be brought in above *Athlone*. For the "nearer the Head of the *Shannon* the fewer the "Levels against the Work." And he was de-

* See the State of the fallacious Lines compared with the natural Trace of Waters in the Schemes of Inland Navigation, &c. Page 7.

monstrably Right, and the Proposition cannot be denied. He pursued the Trace from *Lough Derrera* to the *Bayne* and to *Dublin*:" He also said, he had been at a Gentleman's not far from the *Brosna*, and had given him the same Opinion: And when he desired said *Omer* to trace and level some Bogs, in order to find the Feasibility of a Navigation, he replied, that neither Man or Beast could go upon them, tho' in the Middle of Summer: And tho' he liked his hospitable Entertainment, he would not encourage him, or deceive him about what he thought impracticable."

Mr. *Omer*, soon after the *Inny* Trace was produced, received an Order to go Southward, and make his Scheme and Plan as the Letter mentions; but by Application of a Gentleman, who had taken some Pains, to be well-informed of the Matter, the Navigation Board ordered him to go down, and first examine the Levels and Trace made from the *Inny*. The Gentleman went himself, that he might have the strongest Conviction, that no Error or Mistake was made by the Persons he employed, and scrutinized every Part, and proposed every Doubt he could think of. The Whole was confirmed and approved by the Comptroller.

He gave the Comptroller all his Maps and Levels, and had not the least Conception to the Prejudice of Mr. *Omer*, or that any Scheme was form'd to obstruct or perplex so public and useful an Undertaking: And as the Gentleman was above Collusion himself, and was fairly in the Pursuit

Pursuit of Truth, he had nothing to suspect, as he had nothing to conceal. His Surprise was great, on his Maps being returned, to find they had been altered, and imaginary Rivers introduced, that appear not in the Maps of *Ireland*, or could honestly be introduced in a Map laid down by a different Scale.

He next examined his Plan of Levels, and detected in the Presence of several Gentlemen, an Attempt of Mr. Omer, to impose upwards of 27 Feet on the Top of one Level. He desired Mr. Omer to be very sure he had taken the Numbers right: He answered, he was positive, he was Right: The Map was produced, and the Truth appeared, that he had clapped on 27 Feet and upwards.

The Gentleman ordered his Surveyors to take the Land level from *Castleknock-Gate* to *Moyglare* near *Maynooth* *; and after a Week's Absence, was surprized to find they had been sent by Omer, contrary to his Directions, to level the South Line to the *Liffey*. The Consequence of which is, that he knows the Levels in a few Miles are 176 Feet to the *Poorhouse*.

I believe every Body must own, these were extraordinary Methods of supporting his Opinion. As to the Assertion, that the North-Line would require a greater Number of Locks, Mr. Omer must know, because he levelled it, that the *Shannon's Fall* from the River *Camlin* to the *Brosna*, being a Distance of near forty Miles, must

* N. B. *Kilcock* was mentioned by Mistake, instead of *Moyglare*, in *The Scheme of Inland Navigation*, Page 12.

require six Inches in each Miles to flow. And a Current that runs 4 Miles an Hour requires 18 Inches Fall in a Mile, which makes in all 60 Feet; Of Consequence the Level from the Bros-na, must rise 60 Feet more by Locks than the Camlin. He must know this, if he knows that the Thames or the Severn flow. And a Comptroller certainly knows the first Principles of his Profession. And his Advocate has reduced him to a fatal Dilemma, in stating the following Level; for he must either have done it through Ignorance or Design: In either of which Case, if the Representation is untrue, he ought not to be imposed upon the Public at a Salary of 400*l.* per Ann.

The Trace of Waters
in their natural State.

	Rise and Fall.	Feet.
From Lough Rea, up the River Inny, to Lough Durvera, the Rise is	}	53
From Lough Durvera to the Head of the Yel- low River		71
From thence down the River Dill to the Boyne	}	74
From the Boyne to the Head of the Rye Wa- ter	}	41
From the Head of the Rye Water to Leix- lip.	}	142
From Leixlip to Island Bridge	}	96
		238
From the Liffey to the high Ground on the North Side opposite the City Bason, the Rise of Ground is	}	60
Which deducted, leaves	}	178
Feet		
Now, from the Head of the Rye Water, to the aforesaid high Ground, on the North Side the River, the Difference of Height is	}	178
In all		6

THE
only
good
Use
of
the
Man
give
more
from
the
only
of
the
ground
above
the
all
the

O B S E R V A T I O N S.

Rise
and
Fall.
Feet.

Number
Locks
required.

Lough Ree was avoided by Mr. Omer's own Advice, and a Passage to the *Camlin* recommended, which makes 25 Feet less, remains 28, and shortens it to the *Colleries* upwards of 20 Miles.

The Point where the River runs, one East, and the other West, lies 76 Feet high from *Lough Durvera*; but the Ground lies so low under the Angle made by each River, that a Level, made by his own Direction, was remarked 20 Feet under it; therefore, 20 is to be taken off each Number 76 and 74 remains 56 and 54.

This is right.

The Plan was to take up the *Rye-Water* at *Moyglare*. The Level from the *Rye-Water* Head to *Moyglare* 65 Feet. From *Moyglare* to *Dublin* the Land Level is 10 Feet, in all 75.

What he means here, is, to insinuate that all the Land to the North of *Dublin* is but 60 Feet above the River. And *Harbour-Hill* is above three Times that Height, and the *Park* several Feet higher, which proves the Land Level, and shews his Intention of introducing 29 Locks: And to avoid the Difficulties attending so many Locks, he knew, was the Reason of taking the Land Level, and undoubtedly must give this Plan the Preference in the Opinion of every Man of Judgment. But, as the *Northern Plan* has no Use for these Locks, they are at his Service to make good the Defect in his *Southern Computation*, where only eleven Locks remained for forty Miles *.

* See Schemes for Inland Navigation, Page 10.

The Trace of Waters in their artificial State, or what they are capable of being formed into.

Feet. Locks.

28

6

Locks at 6 Feet
8 Inches each.

56

9

6 Feet 3 Inches
3-4ths.

54

9

6 Feet.

41

7

Less than 6 Feet
by a Fraction
of 5 Inches.

75

12

At 6 Feet 3
Inches.

254

43

To make out one false Assertion, he has knowingly made this Misrepresentation of what he knows to be true, and by fallacy, would clap on 50 Locks more than the Level requires.

Thus it appears, with what Truth and Judgment Mr. Omer's supposed Advocate has set him out. He always allowed the Southern Navigation required 50 Locks, which he consistently says is a less Number than 43. If Mr. Peters is to be believed, the Barrow Trace to Barnaby is 70 Miles, and the Level 450 Feet, which is 6 Feet to a Lock (which is generally Mr. Omer's method of calculating) makes 75 Locks.

Mr. Omer is made to absurd, as still to insist on it being the shorter Line, though he owns he must go by the Barrow. The Northern Trace to the Camm is 65 Miles, which in Mr. Omer's Opinion, is less than 70 by 5 Miles. This certainly must surprise every Body, especially his Admirer, that has wrote Observations on his Letter, who will now have Reason (which he owns he waited for Proofs to ground them upon before) for Admiration, Confidence, and implicit Faith in the Title of Comptroller.

To this may be added, that the Comptroller is of Opinion, that the Rye Water (which is not half sufficient to supply the said Canal in Summer Time)

* See Observations on Mr. Omer's Letter Page 8.

To make out one false Assertion, he has knowingly made this Misrepresentation of what he knows to be true, and by fallacy, would clap on 26 Locks more than the Level requires.

Thus it appears, with what Truth and Judgment Mr. Omer's supposed Advocate has set him out. He always allowed the Southern Navigation required 60 Locks, which he confidently says, is a less Number than 43. If Mr. Peters is to be believed, the *Barrow* Trace to *Bannagher* is 70 Miles, and the Level 450 Feet, which at 6 Feet to a Lock (which is generally Mr. Omer's method of calculating) makes 75 Locks.

Mr. Omer is made so absurd, as still to insist on it's being the shorter Line; though he owns, he must go by the *Barrow*. The Northern Trace to the *Camlin* is 65 Miles, which in Mr. Omer's Opinion, is less than 70 by 15 Miles. This certainly must surprize every Body, especially his Admirer, that has wrote Observations on his Letter, who will now have Reason (which he owns he waited for Proofs to ground them upon before)* for Admiration, Confidence and implicit Faith in the Title of Comptroller.

To this may be added, that the Comptroller is of Opinion, that the Rye Water (which they intend shall be the grand Reservoir) is not half sufficient to supply the said Canals in Summer Time.

* See Observations on Mr. Omer's Letter Page 8.

ANSWER and REMARK.

Mr. *Comptroller* seems not to apprehend the difference between the Source of Water and a *Reservoir*: As it is the only good hint he has thrown out, it would be accepted of, if there was Occasion for it. But as the Source will do, notwithstanding his Opinion, and can be proved by Persons of full as good Judgment as his, the Public need not be put to the Expence of a *Reservoir*, which certainly would collect Water sufficient on all Occasions.

And, whereas by that Scheme, the Line from Dublin to the Shannon is seventy Miles three Quarters long: And that through the Bog of Allen, is fifteen Miles three Quarters shorter. The Comptroller for that, as well as other Reasons, has with all Submission recommended the latter. For besides the Difference in the Length of Lines, here is a less Number of Locks. And as he also will thereby avoid navigating two dangerous troublesome Loughs, where there can be no Track Ways made; and probably in many Places, the Navigators can find no Bottom for their Poles, to set them along.

ANSWER and REMARK.

This Assertion is not proved, nor does it signify whether the Line is shorter or longer, if it be advantageous to the Public, and can possibly be executed at any certain Expence. It is also begging the Question that has not been proved, but

but the contrary Appears; for the Navigation is thought by the Comptroller most feasible, by going round to the *Barrow*: And I hope he does not imagine that way as short as a streight Line *The Comptroller for that, &c.* which is neither Fact nor Reason (other Reasons he may have; but 'till he chuses to mention them, Mankind must suspend their Approbation) *but with all Submission, &c.* There is very little Submission in his Recommendation of a Scheme neither supportable by Fact, Experiment or Utility.

For besides the Difference in Length, there is a less Number of Locks — — Bold Assertion indeed! The Fact is undoubtedly otherwise, as appears by every Level produced; and it is as certain, that there is but one Lough to Navigate, and that he has given his Testimony before that, that Lough was neither dangerous nor troublesome. And as for *Lough Rea* in the *Shannon*, it is every Day navigated by Boats with Slates, &c. brought from *Killaloe* to the *Camlin* without Danger or Hazard. And *Lough Dervera* down the *Inny*, saves ten Miles of new Navigation, by being already navigable; and Row Boats, he knows, navigate Boats and Ships about *Greenwich*, where the River is full as broad as the Lake; and when they are taken in Tow, his wise Observation about Poles is of little Consequence. He must give some better Proofs of his Judgment, before it is of more consequence than his Opinion, he has not as yet founded his Judgment on any one Certainty.

But

But what influenced his Judgment above all was, his being sure of Water from the River Liffey, to supply all the Canals, from the Place where it will be crossed to Dublin, which is quite the Reverse the other Way.

ANSWER and REMARK.

As to the *Liffey*, he has not yet told us, how he Means to cross the Torrents that rise 15 Feet in three Hours: And if he had enquired, he would have had sufficient Evidence, that the *Liffey* is oftner dry than most other Rivers: And his Assertion that the Rye Water is the Reverse, is only asserting two Falshoods instead of one: Besides if he had either Observation or Experience, the Contrast between a Mountain Torrent and the Meandering Waters of an extensive Vale is sufficient Evidence against him.

From what is here offered, the Comptroller humbly Appeals to the Justice of his Employers, and to the World, for the Impartiality and Honesty of his Representations, to the Hon. Committee of the House of Commons: Notwithstanding the Injurious Reflection cast upon him, in a Pamphlet lately printed and published; as if he had some other Inducements than Truth and Sincerity for what he has said.

From

ANSWER and REMARK.

From what has been offered, the *Comptroller* has much more Reason to apply for the Justice than the Approbation of Mankind. The benefits the Public are to receive from his Opinion and Judgment, he chuses to conceal: His Acts are the best Representation of his Honesty: And he complains of injurious Reflections; perhaps he is offended, that all People do not concur in letting him Comptrol them, without requiring Proof of his Assertions. His own Conduct may draw Reflections on him; but the Public must not be injured, for fear of offending him. When a Man will not declare his Motives for extraordinary Assertions, or say Things he can't prove, or confesses, he has any Knowledge of; to be sure, no one is Fool enough to think they can proceed from Truth or Sincerity. They may from Ignorance and Prejudice.

F I N I S.

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